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CONFERENCE

Thirty-ninth Session

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Assessment of FAO Governance Reforms

Executive Summary

IPA Action 2.74 foresaw that, by 2015, “the Conference will assess the workings of the governance reforms, including the role and functioning of Regional Conferences, with an independent review as input to this process”. In response to the Recommendations and Suggestions made in the *Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms* (C 2015/25) an Open-ended Working Group on the Assessment of Governance Reforms (OEWG), to which all Members were invited, was convened by the Independent Chairperson of the Council¹ on 6 February 2015 to propose actions for each Recommendation and Suggestion, and again on 19 February 2015 to review and validate the proposals made by Members at the earlier meeting. This document comprises three sections:

- (i) A Foreword by the Independent Chairperson of the Council;
- (ii) A table setting out proposed actions, endorsed by the above-mentioned OEWG, for each of the Recommendations and Suggestions made in the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms;
- (iii) A draft resolution for submission to the 39th Session of Conference.

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is invited to review and endorse for submission to the Conference the proposed assessment of the FAO Governance Reforms, including proposed actions in response to the Recommendations and Suggestions set out in Section II of this document, bearing in mind input and guidance received from the Joint Meeting of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and 157th Session of the Finance Committee (March 2015).

Suggested action by the Conference

The Conference is invited to assess the FAO Governance Reforms and to review and endorse:

- (i) the proposed actions in response to the Recommendations and Suggestions set out in Section II of this document, bearing in mind input and guidance received from the 151st Session of Council (March 2015);
- (ii) the draft Conference Resolution set out in Section III of this document.

¹ CL 148/REP paragraphs 21-24



Queries on the substantive content of the document may be addressed to:

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I. Foreword by the Independent Chairperson of the Council

1. When the FAO Conference approved the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal (IPA) in 2008, in response to the recommendations made by the 2007 Independent External Evaluation of FAO (IEE), there was general agreement among Members that governance underpinned all the IPA actions in their entirety, which jointly aimed to strengthen FAO. Indeed, this was so much the case that 102 of the 274 IPA actions focused on the reform of governance. The reason for this emphasis on governance was made very clear in the report of the IEE:

“Without a substantive improvement in governance the remainder of the recommendations in this evaluation will be at best sub-optimal in ‘charting the way forward, to better meet the challenges of the future in an evolving global environment’ ...”²

The Report went on to single out the level of trust that prevailed in the Governing Bodies as the primary issue of concern that needed to be addressed if the governance of the Organization was to improve in terms of effectiveness and credibility:

“... all Members wish to overcome these divisions. A major shift of attitude is required, leading to a constructive engagement of Members with each other. The commonality of interests should be the source of inspiration for the search for common ground.”³

2. Eight years on from the publication of what amounted to an alarm call to improve FAO governance it is reassuring to learn that a “major shift of attitude” has taken place and that progress in the field of governance reform has been considerable. According to the *Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms* (C 2015/25):

“...definitions of Governing Body responsibilities and workflow are now clearer, meetings are well structured and business like; the sense of accountability of the Secretariat to Members has increased. Trust has largely been re-established between the Members and the Secretariat and among Members themselves.”⁴

Indeed, in their concluding remarks, the Review Team noted that:

“...the Governing Bodies have made substantial progress in their reform. They have implemented almost all the governance actions contained in the IPA, which has made a significant difference in the enabling environment for governance within the Organization.”⁵

3. This widely acknowledged success of governance reform is in no small part due to the concerted and continuous efforts made by both Members and the Secretariat since 2008. Those of us who have mapped the progress made during this span of time could hardly have failed to notice the collective will to take advantage of the momentum generated by the IEE to move on from what the Report described as levels of

² Report of the Independent External Evaluation of FAO (C 2007/7A1-Rev.1), paragraph 737

³ Idem, paragraph 740

⁴ Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms, final report (C 2015/25), paragraph ES5

⁵ Idem, paragraph 272

conflict that were disabling the Organization⁶ to a culture of cooperation and convergence within the FAO Governing Bodies.

4. I was afforded a vantage point to track the reform progress from 2007 to 2011 as Vice-Chairperson of three separate Conference Committees on (i) Follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation (CoC-IEE); (ii) Implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action (CoC-IEE, IPA); and (iii) the Open-Ended Working Group on Governance issues (CoC-OEWG). Now, as Independent Chairperson of the Council, I am able to gauge the substantial progress made in reforming governance at FAO. Certainly, a more business-like approach to Governing Body and related matters now pervades all our meetings, whether they be the regular informal consultations with Regional Group Chairpersons, the much-appreciated Informal Seminars convened by the Director-General, or sessions of Council itself, during which the will to focus on conclusions, decisions and recommendations is tangible not only during our deliberations, but also in the concise and action-oriented reports of the sessions. This more efficient approach to governance is overarched by a renewed sense of trust between Members and Management and among the Members themselves.

5. Nowhere was this new way of working on governance more evident than in the way the review of governance reform activities has been managed over the past year. Indeed, the table set out in Section II, which needs to be read in conjunction with the *Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms – Final Report* (C 2015/25), is the result of the type of business-like working methods and informal contacts advocated by the IPA. When the Council at its 150th Session (1-5 December 2014) welcomed the *Draft Report of the Independent Review of Governance Reforms* it also offered input to the Review Team, which was taken on board in the aforementioned Final Report, and looked forward to an in-depth review of its contents at the 151st Session of Council (23-27 March 2015). Between sessions I met twice with the Chairpersons and Vice-chairpersons of the Regional Groups to discuss how best to carry out such a review, and twice in an Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) to which all Members were invited.

6. The input made by the Regional Groups and the OEWG form the basis for the proposed actions for each of the sixteen Recommendations and eight “Operational Suggestions” set out in the table on the Assessment of Governance Reforms in Section II of this document. Suggestion 8 regards Article XIV bodies, the subject of an ongoing review process by the Governing Bodies, and was added at the first meeting of the Open Ended Working Group. Members have yet to propose a course of action and time frame for this additional suggestion. The recommendations, suggestions and proposed actions set out in the assessment table will be discussed at the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in March 2015, which will in turn review the document and offer advice on the proposed actions to the 151st Session of Council, which will submit the document to the 39th Session of Conference in June 2015 for discussion and decision.

7. When the OEWG was launched I pointed out that the time frame for the first phase of the review process was tight, and hence asked Members to distinguish between:

- i) Recommendations for which a clear consensus had emerged and hence could be the subject of a decision by the June 2015 session of the Conference; and
- ii) Recommendations which could be mainstreamed through regular sessions of the Governing Bodies for further discussion and decision.

The draft Conference resolution set out in Section III of this document, which reflects this breakdown, is the result of the work carried out by the OEWG and is submitted to the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, the 151st Session of the Council and the 39th Session of the Conference for review and endorsement.

8. The reform of FAO governance has been a long and challenging process and my sense is that Members feel the time has come to take this opportunity to mainstream any follow up work through the

⁶ Idem, paragraph 740

Governing Bodies, as proposed in the draft Conference resolution. Whilst being fully aware of this desire for closure of the IPA, I also appreciate that Members are committed to maintaining the productive and transparent working methods which have characterized the entire reform process.

9. I am most grateful for the impartiality and professional approach demonstrated by the external reviewers, Ms Maxine Olson and Ms Nadia Hijab, and in particular for their constructive engagement with members and staff at all stages of the review process. I should also like to express my deep appreciation for the work undertaken by the Regional Group Chairpersons, the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and the Council in ensuring that Members' reactions to the *Report of the Independent Review of Governance Reforms* were heard.

10. In their concluding remarks the external reviewers mentioned that there was still "some way to go for effective and efficient governance"⁷. I trust that the following table will serve the purpose of enabling Members to make up for any shortfalls identified in the Report, and hence ensure that FAO Governing Bodies function effectively and efficiently in order to meet the challenges of the future in an evolving global environment.

Wilfred J. Ngirwa
Independent Chairperson of the Council

⁷ Idem paragraph 274

II. ASSESSMENT OF FAO GOVERNANCE REFORMS

Extract from the Final Report of the
Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms, 31 December 2014

The following table includes inputs made by Members at the Open-ended Working Group on the Assessment of Governance Reforms convened by the Independent Chairperson of the Council on Friday 6 February 2015, and subsequently reviewed and validated by Members at the resumed meeting of the Open-ended Working Group held on Thursday 19 February 2015.

CONFERENCE	
Recommendation 1	On the review of Global policy coherence and regulatory frameworks
	para.
In order to strengthen its contribution to global policy coherence and regulatory frameworks, Governing Bodies should conduct a critical review of the global issues and identify a biennial theme for consideration and decision by its RCs, TCs and Conference. This theme should be consistent with the scope of the approved Reviewed Strategic Framework and within the priorities identified by the RCs and TCs for work within the PWB.	63
Background: <i>The operational changes in the Conference have, on the whole, had positive effects that are widely appreciated by FAO Membership. [...] The IPA actions have, however, not been successful in strengthening the role of the Conference as the apex body for FAO's 'international functions'. The steps taken thus far to realign the work of the RCs, TCs and Conference to create a cohesive, functional 'international functions stream', that could define, debate and approve a policy or regulatory framework across these bodies have been inadequate.</i>	55-56
<i>Action 2.1 implies a more proactive role for the GBs in agenda setting for substantive dialogue on 'international functions' than has previously been the case in the Organization. The process outlined above [see paragraphs 57-59] increases GBs' responsibility for the selected themes, and provides greater opportunity for dialogue during analysis and negotiation phases within the GBs themselves, with the Secretariat in the role of technical support to the GBs. This shift would both increase GB influence on work within the Organization itself, as well as the Organization's collective influence in global dialogue.</i>	61
Proposed action:	
<u>Recommendation accepted.</u>	
The idea of identifying a biennial theme to increase focus on strategic global issues, within the Strategic Framework and the priorities decided by the Governing Bodies, should be pursued further.	
The Conference, Regional Conferences and Technical Committees should systematically address important challenges and issues of global and regional dimension with a view to formulating policy options and, where appropriate, reflecting them as priorities in the Medium Term Plan.	
This would lead to greater consistency in engaging in global dialogue and policy setting and assist FAO to assert its primacy given its comparative advantages and technical knowledge, enabling it to contribute to and influence international dialogue and decision making.	
The process and mechanics of how biennial themes are to be selected, and what deliverables are foreseen, need to be carefully explored through broad-ranging and well-informed decision-making among Members, through the relevant Governing Bodies.	
Governing Body: Proposal to Joint Meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees and session(s) of Council for submission to Conference in 2017 for decision and implementation thereafter.	Time Frame: For decision at 2015 Session of Conference and for implementation at the 2017 Session.

COUNCIL	
Recommendation 2	On Council's oversight function
	para.
Council should continue to push for the kind of results-based information that will enable it to give effective guidance and oversight to FAO's work, with the active support of the Programme Committee and Finance Committee. If there is still room for improvement in the results-based information for oversight, Council may consider drawing on independent expertise for assistance in formulating appropriate indicators.	84
Background: Council has demonstrated its ability to be proactive in providing guidance and oversight, based on the documentation it receives. However, it still lacks effective results-based information to carry out these functions and hold management accountable. In part due to the changes in the SF between the time it was first adopted in 2009 and reviewed and re-adopted in 2013, it has taken time to develop the robust results-monitoring tools that can provide what Council needs.	84
Proposed action:	
Recommendation partially accepted.	
Results-based information to continue to be a critical requirement for Governing Bodies to exert effective guidance and oversight of FAO's work, based on existing in-house expertise. The Secretariat is charged with expanding and improving indicators for oversight of the Organization and keep Members abreast of measures being taken to achieve results-based management. The results-based information should be reflected in documentation prepared for the Council, Conference and other Governing Bodies.	
There is broad agreement that outside expertise should not be sought, although it could be considered as an option for specific matters.	
Governing Body: All Governing Bodies to call for results-based information and management.	Time Frame: 2015
Recommendation 3	On Council's role in recommending the budget level
	para.
The outstanding IPA action regarding Council's recommendation of the budget level to Conference should be closed.	86
Background: The IR Team reviewed the considerable efforts that Members made in 2009, 2011, and 2013 regarding the recommendation of the budget level to Conference. The work of the review indicates that this is a political issue, and the obstacle is the sharp divergence between Members adopting zero-growth positions and Members as well as the Secretariat pushing for at least some growth. Thus, the IR Team concludes that Council will not be able to make a firm recommendation on the level of the budget to Conference as long as these differences remain. [...] It is important to note that the recommendation does not preclude an agenda item on the budget in Council, as discussion there provides a useful opportunity for Members to understand each other's positions and facilitates decision during Conference.	86

Proposed action:	
<u>Recommendation accepted.</u>	
There is consensus that the outstanding IPA Action be closed, but that the matter remain on the agenda of the pre-Conference session of Council for discussion purposes to facilitate dialogue and enable Members who so wish to make their positions clear, with a view to making a decision on the budget level at the Conference.	
There is general acceptance that this IPA Action has not been achieved given that not all Members are in a position to state their stance on the budget level before the Conference opens. However, this does not exclude that a future session of Council may decide to submit a proposal on the budget level to the Conference for decision.	
Governing Body: Council (151), Conference (39) and CCLM	Time Frame: 2015-2017
Recommendation 4	On Council's size
	para.
The outstanding IPA action regarding the size and composition of Council should be suspended until the ICC considers there is sufficient consensus to achieve a satisfactory solution for most Members.	88
Background: <i>While the IR Team found that trust among Members had increased significantly since the time of the IEE, it identified other factors that also influenced Member decisions on Council size. One of these was the perceived advantages and disadvantages of delegation to a smaller group, and the importance attached by Members to having a representative on what is FAO's 'executive' governing body.</i>	81
<i>The IR Team believes there is great value in the IEE recommendation for an Executive Board given the way the smaller groups work, including the collegiality and trust that make them efficient and effective and enhance the rich, substantive nature of their discussions. At the same time, it recognizes that Members value participation and are not yet ready to delegate as fully as would be necessary for a smaller Council, or Executive Board. This may become possible as the role of Regional Groups continues to gain in importance as fora to work out regional positions that can capture the views of all their members. [...] The IR Team concludes that at this stage and for the near future it will not be possible to achieve consensus on changing the size and composition of Council. However, there may be an opportunity in future years to arrive at a political consensus around this issue.</i>	88
Proposed action:	
<u>Recommendation accepted.</u>	
There is consensus that the outstanding IPA action regarding the size and composition of Council be suspended until the Members consider there is sufficient consensus to achieve a satisfactory solution.	
Governing Body: Council (151); Conference (39)	Time Frame: 2015

INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL	
Recommendation 5 <i>On support to ICC in case of additional responsibilities</i>	para.
When the ICC is tasked by Members with additional responsibility, additional resources should be provided from amongst the Members.	95
Background: <i>FAO should continue to have an ICC not only to sustain progress in the reforms and the trust built up among Members and between Members and the Secretariat but also to provide continuity, help to facilitate political or governance issues that may arise, and facilitate the continuing progress of governance reform. However, the ICC should not take on major functions like facilitating ICN2 unless greater staff support is made available to the incumbent and/or greater Member engagement is forthcoming because this risks overloading what is already a heavy responsibility.</i>	95
Proposed action: <u>Recommendation partially accepted.</u> When the ICC is tasked by Council with an additional responsibility, financial and staff support should be found from existing resources or voluntary contributions to enable the ICC to fulfill that responsibility.	
Governing Body: Council (151); Conference (39)	Time Frame: 2015
Recommendation 6 <i>On qualifications for the ICC</i>	para.
The Basic Texts dealing with the ICC should be revised to <u>add</u> the words ‘appropriate experience in the functioning of FAO governing bodies’ <u>to the existing text</u> “ <i>appropriate experience in areas relevant to the Organization’s work</i> ”.	98
Background: <i>If Members are willing to take on the challenge of ‘continuous improvement’ of the efficiency, effectiveness and ownership of FAO governance, the role of an ICC with a sense of continuity across time and a big picture of FAO Governing will become even more important.</i>	96
Proposed action: <u>General convergence on the Recommendation</u> The Basic Texts dealing with the ICC should be revised to add the words ‘ <i>and knowledge of the functioning of FAO governing bodies</i> ’ to the existing text: “ <i>appropriate experience in areas relevant to the Organization’s work</i> ”. Reservation: The proposed change would preclude highly-qualified candidates whose experience has been built up outside the confines of FAO. Observation: FAO Conference Resolution 9/2009 would need to be amended.	
Governing Body: Draft resolution to CCLM, then Council for approval by Conference in 2017 and implementation thereafter	Time Frame: 2015-2017

PROGRAMME AND FINANCE COMMITTEES AND COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS	
Recommendation 7	On tracking issues over time
	para.
The PC, FC, and CCLM should identify cross-cutting or strategic issues to track over time as part of their review of documentation provided for agenda items in its sessions. This work would be done on an informal basis either by Members who volunteer as individuals or as a group. When appropriate, a decision would be made on whether it would be useful to formalize the Committee's findings in a report with recommendations to Council on the matter.	113
Background: <i>In the view of the IR Team, part of the reason for the GBs' insufficient ability to hold management accountable in some areas is the way their sessions are currently structured and supported. As agendas follow the same pattern each biennium and discussion is based on documentation prepared by the Secretariat for each agenda item, the GBs themselves do not maintain their own 'watching brief' or institutional memory on strategic or cross-cutting issues, including those that have proven to be difficult to address successfully. This has impeded their ability to draw on past experience in order to develop a deeper knowledge of the Organization's performance. An alternative approach to present practice would be to select certain issues that merit closer attention and track them over several sessions to understand how the issues are treated across the Programme, as described in the documentation submitted to the PC, be it programme cycle documentation or evaluation reports. [...] The PC may, in due course, report its findings to Council. This would be in addition to standing agenda items, and would not in any way preclude Members from presenting their or their Regional Groups' views during the meeting on all agenda items. In the view of the IR Team, the value of tracking is twofold: it provides the opportunity for the PC to be proactive in setting a direction for part of its work while the sustained attention to a given item will increase the PC's ability to address it in more depth. Both are important in improving accountability. The issues the PC identifies for tracking could be recorded in the MYPOW. The FC and CCLM would also benefit from adopting this approach with regard to issues within its agenda.</i>	
Recommendation accepted.	
The MYPOW of the Programme Committee, Finance Committee and Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters should factor in coverage of cross-cutting and strategic issues to be tracked over time with a view to making recommendations to the Council on the status of the selected issues, which should be clearly indicated on Agendas, when appropriate.	
Governing Body: PC, FC and CCLM to track cross-cutting issues and to report them to Council.	Time Frame: New membership of Council Committees elected on 15 June 2015 to determine which cross-cutting issues they wish to track during their term of office.
Recommendation 8	On qualifications of candidates to Committees of the Council
	para.
Regional Groups should continuously engage in a search for potential candidates with the requisite expertise in Rome and in capitals; the information provided at the time of election should be as specific as possible with respect to candidates' previous education and/or experience in the areas of work of the relevant Governing Body.	115

<p>Background: <i>The Survey revealed some ambivalence about whether PC members have the qualifications necessary for effective functioning, which indicates the desirability for greater specificity with respect to necessary skills and experience for PC work. With regard to participation in the meetings themselves, the IR Team found that not all PC members were fully engaged.</i></p>	103-104
<p>Proposed action: <u>Maintain status quo, but improve nomination form.</u> The final decision on nomination of candidates for membership of Governing Bodies lies with each Member Nation, in line with existing requirements set out in the Basic Texts. The information provided should set out both relevant qualifications and experience of the candidate, and the relevant provisions of the Basic Texts should be reproduced on the nomination form completed by applicants, and reproduced as a Council document for each Council Committee.</p>	
<p>Governing Body: Council (151); Conference (39)</p>	<p>Time Frame: 2015</p>
<p>Recommendation 9 <i>On the review of evaluation and audit reports</i></p>	para.
<p>The Programme Committee and Finance Committee should each have the responsibility to review the evaluation and audit information relevant to the scope of work of each body. The PC and FC Chairs should jointly decide whether to refer items to the individual committees or to the Joint Meeting.</p>	116
<p>Background: <i>The IR Team also draws attention to the need for the PC and FC to consider and make recommendations on segments of evaluations and audit that relate to their work.</i></p>	116
<p>Proposed action: <u>Recommendation accepted.</u> The Programme and Finance Committees should review relevant evaluation and audit information under existing mechanisms.</p>	
<p>Governing Body: Programme and Finance Committees</p>	<p>Time Frame: 2015</p>

TECHNICAL COMMITTEES		
Recommendation 10	<i>On the mandate of Technical Committees during the inter-sessional period</i>	para.
Based on the advice of the CCLM, and based upon the above-noted options [<i>see below</i>], the Council and the Technical Committees should clarify the possible role and authority of the Bureaux and Steering Committees during the inter-sessional period.		166
Background: <i>Given the characteristics of the TC sessions, their role in making recommendations to Council on internal oversight is limited. The possibility for the TCs to play a more significant role in the inter-sessional period has been raised; however as the TCs' role is effectively completed once it has made its recommendations to Council, further work in the inter-sessional period seems to exceed its authority. It will thus be of the utmost importance that the possible scope of action on internal oversight for the SC/Bureaux be clarified, so that each membership may be able to delegate authority as each feels appropriate and relevant.</i>		164
<i>There are, in the view of the IR Team, two key elements to consider in this respect: (1) Realistic budget information could be made available to the TCs for their discussions on priorities, as this report has recommended in the case of RCs, in order to increase the relevance of the decisions on the final programme by keeping its recommendations within the expected level of resources; (2) The example of the Bureau of the CFS could be followed in terms of a more active role for the SC/Bureaux of the TCs: this would require the whole constituency to agree during the plenary sessions on the Bureaux' mandate to represent the membership during the inter-sessional period, and, as noted above, also work out the relationship of the TC SC/Bureau with the PC and Council. The Bureaux' relationship with the Secretariat would also have to be carefully managed to avoid crossing of the line by the GBs into the management role that is the purview of the Secretariat.</i>		165
Proposed action:		
<u>Recommendation accepted</u>		
The Bureaux of Technical Committees should assume a better-defined and more proactive role within the mandate of each Committee during the inter-sessional period.		
Governing Body: CCLM, Joint Meeting, Technical Committees and Council		Time Frame: 2015-2017

REGIONAL CONFERENCES	
Recommendation 11	On priority-setting by the Regional Conferences
	para.
Priority setting at the regional level should focus on the Organizational Outcome level, in order to provide more specific guidance for the Organization's work in the coming biennium.	192
Background: <i>Priority setting for the coming biennium is intended to be one of the key elements of RC discussion to guide FAO's work in the region. Despite its prominence in the agenda, the documentation and the outcome of the discussion tend to be quite general, and most reports to the Programme Committee on priorities decided by the RCs are primarily a re-statement of the Organization's Strategic Objectives rather than proposals with a more specific regional dimension. The RCs could be requested to turn their attention to more specific issues within the SF in order to derive more pointed and richer conclusions that could provide greater direction to FAO's work within the region. A firm, realistic resource window should also be provided to the RC, to avoid a 'shopping list' approach to this more specific priority-setting exercise.</i>	185
<i>With regard to internal oversight, the RCs' work on priority setting should move away from the very general discussions about priorities, now that the Reviewed SF and its results framework are in place. The approval of Regional Initiatives is a good step in this direction. In future, it should be possible to deepen RC involvement in defining regional initiatives by using the Reviewed SF to focus on the FAO outcomes and outputs that are seen to be of particular relevance to the region.</i>	192
Proposed action:	
Recommendation accepted	
In order to strengthen their internal oversight function and their relatively-recent role as Governing Bodies, the Regional Conferences should set priorities at the Outcome level of the Strategic Objectives, in alignment with identified regional and sub-regional priorities and special initiatives.	
Governing Body: Regional Conferences, Council	Time Frame: 2016 round of Regional Conferences to review the issue and report back through Joint Meeting to June 2016 session of Council.
Recommendation 12	On information available to the Regional Conferences
	para.
The Regional Conferences should have results-based information at their disposal to be able to assess past programme implementation and achievement. More detailed progress on regional activities implemented under the Regional Offices' responsibility, including on the Regional Initiatives, should also be available for the Regional Conferences' review, and include financial information.	193
Background: <i>With regard to internal oversight, there is room to improve the information that the RCs have for this work. The new results framework and the planned results monitoring tool should make centrally-generated, detailed information available for the use of the RCs. The regional programme implemented by the Regional Offices, including the Regional Initiatives, should form the specific area of governance and decision making</i>	193

<i>of the RC.</i>		
Proposed action:		
<u>Recommendation accepted</u>		
The Regional Conferences should have access to results-based information in order to assess the degree of progress made in approved regional programmes and special initiatives, and also to make use of such results-based information in the formulation of new regional and sub-regional programmes and initiatives. Active collaboration among the FAO Regional Offices, the outgoing and the incoming Chairpersons of the Regional Conferences and the Regional Groups could further enhance this aspect.		
Governing Body: Regional Conferences	Time Frame: 2016-17 biennium	
MYPOW		
Recommendation 13	<i>On MYPOW format for Council and its Committees</i>	para.
For the Council and its Committees, the format of the MYPOW should be modified by deleting or revising the Results section, and inserting a section on ‘Outstanding and strategic issues to be tracked over time’.		206
Background: <i>While the intent of the MYPOW is to provide an opportunity for the GB Members to reflect on the results of their work and to review their working methods, there have been problems in crafting results in MYPOWs that are sufficiently specific to be useful in assessing results achieved by the GB. In the case of the MYPOWS for Council and its Committees, the stated result is the acceptance or use of the GB’s recommendations by the GB to which it reports. This result is not within the control of the GB itself, however, and misses the qualitative aspects of its work. [...] In effect, the ‘Results’ as specified in Section ii) have increased the complexity of the document, without adding greatly to its usefulness.</i>		200
Proposed action:		
<u>Broad consensus on this recommendation</u>		
A section on ‘Outstanding and strategic issues to be tracked over time’ could be added when they emerge from their respective Governing Bodies, however, the format of the MYPOWs of the Council and its Committees should be improved by making the Results Section more focused and specific.		
Governing Body: CCLM, FC, PC, Council	Time Frame: Forthcoming sessions of each Governing Body under the standing item on the MYPOW	
Recommendation 14	<i>On MYPOWs for Regional Conferences and Technical Committees</i>	para.
For Technical Committees and Regional Conferences, the MYPOW should be discontinued, unless the GB leadership and Secretariat themselves wish to continue to prepare and report on it to Council. If the MYPOW continues to be prepared, its formal presentation during the session should be replaced		206

with an oral presentation by the Chair summarizing GB performance.		
<p>Background: <i>In the case of the larger GBs, the MYPOW has some limited usefulness to the leadership, i.e. the bureau, steering committee, and secretariat, primarily as an introduction to the work of the GB, a briefing on aspirations for the conduct of the sessions, and as a means of tracking when items are scheduled. As TCs become more active inter-sessionally, MYPOWs might become a means to document and track agreed inter-sessional activities, as was discussed in COFI.</i></p> <p><i>In the case of the RCs and TCs, the size and formality of the meetings preclude a frank discussion of actual performance of the GB. Its presentation during the session is confusing, and detracts from the quality of the session. The IR Team proposes two options regarding the development and use of MYPOWs in these bodies: (a) To discontinue RC and TC MYPOWs: session reports should serve as the reference for agreed actions. A simple statement of Working Methods should be developed and presented to the GB for review and approval. [...] (b) The MYPOW could continue to be formulated and become a public document, but the MYPOW itself should not be placed on the agenda of the meeting. Instead, the Chair could provide his/her own, oral assessment of the performance of the GB according to the criteria set in the MYPOW, perhaps as a part of the concluding remarks.</i></p>		203
		205
<p>Proposed action:</p> <p><u>Recommendation not accepted</u></p> <p>The MYPOWs for Technical Committees and Regional Conferences could enable continuity and longer-term planning and accountability if their potential is fully realized.</p>		
Governing Body: RCs and TCs	Time Frame: next session of each GB	
EVALUATION		
Recommendation 15	On the scope of thematic evaluations	para.
The scope of thematic evaluations should focus on the Organizational Outcome level of the Reviewed SF, either through the compilation of meta-analysis, based on information from past evaluations carried out by OED, or through specific evaluations designed for this purpose.		237
<p>Background: <i>The move to meta-evaluations is continuing, with the aim of analysing data on results in a way that enables GB enable decision-making on strategic objectives.</i></p> <p><i>The IR Team believes that there is no alternative to the dual reporting line and that even in the best possible conditions this will still create some tension that will need continuous management over time. Members may wish to consider regular interaction between the Internal Evaluation Committee and the PC, as envisaged by the IPA. This could help strengthen the contribution of evaluations to both management and GB and reduce any tensions in the dual reporting line.</i></p>		234
		237
<p>Proposed action:</p> <p><u>Recommendation accepted</u></p>		

Thematic evaluations to focus on the Organizational Outcome level of the reviewed Strategic Framework, including other UN cross-cutting themes relevant to FAO's mandate. Thematic evaluations should cover both relevant normative work and field activities. Regular interaction between the Internal Evaluation Committee and the Programme Committee could take place according to an agreed schedule.

Governing Body: Programme Committee, Council

Time Frame: Programme Committee: for inclusion in forthcoming workplan.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Recommendation 16 *On the qualifications of FAO Director-General*

para.

The outstanding IPA action regarding the desirable qualifications for DG candidates should be closed.

254

Background: *All IPA actions relating to the Director-General have been implemented, with minor adjustments, and only the establishment of "desirable qualifications" for the post remains outstanding.*

252

As for the outstanding action regarding the qualifications of the Director-General, the IR Team has listened carefully to the arguments for and against, noting that the majority were not in favour of pursuing this action, notwithstanding the success of other Organizations in doing so. It further notes that under the current rules of nomination, information about candidates is made available and that candidates must be presented to both Council and Conference before election. The IR Team concludes that this issue will not be resolved in the foreseeable future and considers it should be closed.

254

Proposed action:

Recommendation partially accepted.

There is consensus that the outstanding IPA action regarding the qualifications of the FAO Director-General be suspended pending further consultation among Members to reach consensus on this issue.

Observation: Diversity of opinion was recognized as some saw desirable qualifications for DG candidates as a useful guide for Member Nations wishing to nominate a candidate

Governing Body: Council (CL 151); Conference (C 39)

Time Frame: February-June 2015

Operational suggestions: The Review Team also identified a number of ‘Nuts and Bolts’ issues, or points for consideration by Members, that it believes will make a substantial difference in the workings of the Governing Bodies concerned. (Paragraph 271)

1) Suggestions for the Council

- a) To capture the richness of their discussions, Council may wish to include short summaries of the discussion in Council reports as part of the Chair’s summary or as relevant;
- b) In order to continue to be at the cutting edge of Governing Bodies’ reform, Council may wish to draw on expertise on their processes from outside sources, if this is not available within the Secretariat;
- c) The ICC could convene the Informal Meetings of the Regional Group Chairs to clarify emerging grey areas in discussion with Senior Management with respect to the relationship between the Regional Groups and the Regional Offices, as well as to exchange information among the Regional Groups on working methods and best practices to enhance their roles;
- d) The Committees of the Council and the Joint Meeting could consider ‘tracking for efficiency’ to identify areas of duplication and overlap in order to streamline workflow. Similarly, working methods and agendas should be tracked within the FC to identify areas for further efficiency.

Proposed action:

- a) **Suggestion not accepted.** The current format of succinct and focused Council reports based on summaries made by the ICC after each agenda item should be maintained. The present style of reporting, which focuses on conclusions, decisions and recommendations has been developed over several biennia in response to IPA Action 2.22 and facilitates the work of the drafting committee. It is too early to backtrack on an approach to reporting that is generally perceived as useful.
- b) **Suggestion partially accepted.** The Council should continue to rely on the Secretariat for expert advice, but could draw on external expertise in exceptional circumstances.
- c) **Suggestion accepted.** The ICC to continue to convene Informal Meetings of the Regional Group Chairs to clarify emerging grey areas in discussion with Senior Management as required.
- d) **Suggestion accepted.** Workflow of Council Committees and Joint Meeting would benefit from ‘tracking for efficiency’ to identify and eliminate areas of duplication and overlap.

Governing Body: As appropriate

Time Frame: As soon as possible

2) *Suggestions for the Evaluation Function*

- a) The Programme Committee and the (Internal) Evaluation Committee could consider regular interaction to strengthen the contribution of evaluations to both management and Governing Bodies and to reduce the risk of tensions in the dual reporting line;
- b) The Programme Committee could consider including the following in the Terms of Reference for the Independent Evaluation of FAO's Evaluation Function:
- ways to enhance the effectiveness of the dual reporting line;
 - the independence of FAO Office of Evaluation to manage its budget once it has been approved and any effects this has on its ability to perform;
 - the implications of OED-led and authored reports for the independence of evaluation findings;
 - how useful and implementable OED recommendations to management have been; the effectiveness of the “evaluation/management response/follow-up report/validation” process in supporting Governing Body guidance and oversight;
 - the Programme Committee's use of evaluation findings in its strategic guidance, priority setting and oversight of FAO.

Proposed action:

- a) **Suggestion accepted.** The Programme Committee and the Internal Evaluation Committee to have regular interaction to enhance the contribution of evaluation findings to both Management and Governing Bodies to avoid dual reporting lines.
- b) **Suggestion to be considered further by the Programme Committee**

Observations:

“Several complex issues are raised:

- (i) It is not appropriate for the PC to get involved in the TORs of evaluations. Evaluation is the job of OED and the Programme Committee should not be micro-managing the work of OED. PC's interest is only in the product of OED and not how OED's manages its work.
- (ii) OED has several reporting lines: on corporate evaluations it reports both to the PC and Management. On project evaluations it reports directly to the implementation unit concerned. It is the implementation unit that transmits the report of the project evaluation to the country concerned and to the donor. Country programme evaluations are reported to Management and the country concerned, while the PC receives a synthesis involving summaries of several country programme evaluations”.

“The Programme Committee may consider the suggestion at an appropriate time.”

“A further independent review of the issue is required”.

Governing Body: Programme Committee

Time Frame: 2015-2017

3) *Suggestions for the Regional Conferences*

- a) As Chairs remain in place between sessions, more thought could be given to clarifying their responsibilities vis-à-vis the Regional Conference membership and the Secretariat;
- b) It would contribute to the Regional Conferences' value as *fora* for the exchange of information and experience if Sessions are organized in a way that allows for greater, informal exchange of views among delegates;
- c) The priorities identified by regional technical commissions on forests and fisheries could be included as an integral part of Regional Conferences' reports to Council with regard to priorities for the work of the Organization in the region.

Proposed action:

- a) **Suggestion accepted.** Responsibilities of the Regional Conference Chairs in the inter-sessional period should be clarified further, taking into account financial and secretariat support for the inter-sessional period.
- b) **Suggestion accepted.** It would contribute to the value of Regional Conferences as *fora* for the exchange of information and experience if sessions were organized to allow for a greater and more informal exchange of views and experience among delegates, and also with major regional organizations.
- c) **Suggestion accepted.** The priorities identified by regional technical commissions on forests and fisheries could be included as an integral part of the reports of Regional Conferences to the Council as regard priorities for the work of the Organization in each region. However, caution is to be exercised to avoid duplication of work, as the priorities of the regional technical commissions are already reflected in the reports of the Technical Committees.

Governing Body: Regional Conferences

Time Frame: 2016-17

4) *Suggestions for the Technical Committees*

Members may wish to give consideration to a more comprehensive review of the work of the Technical Committees to respond to points beyond the scope of this review.

Proposed action:

Suggestion to be reconsidered at a later stage

A review of the Technical Committees, if in agreement with the provisions of the Basic Texts, could be undertaken at a later stage, if there is consensus among Members to do so. The reformed FAO should focus on delivering in coming years before embarking on another cycle of review and reform - the risk of “paralysis by review” is to be avoided.

Governing Body:

Time Frame: Not in the immediate future

5) *Suggestions regarding Ministerial Meetings*

When considering future Ministerial Meetings, Members may wish to take into account their likely impact compared with the time and cost for both Members and Secretariat. However, the Basic Texts should remain unchanged so that Conference and Council have the option in case of compelling need.

Proposed action:

Suggestion accepted

Ministerial Meetings should be the exception rather than the norm. Expected impact to be evaluated *vis-à-vis* financial costs and the benefit to the work of the Organization.

Governing Body: Council, Conference

Time Frame: as required

6) Suggestions on definition of Governing Bodies	
As presently worded, the definition of GBs contained in the Basic Texts is unclear as to whether it is referring to ‘international functions’ or internal oversight. Consideration should be given to clarifying that it covers both.	
Proposed action:	
<u>Suggestion not accepted</u>	
The definition of Governing Bodies is adequately worded in the Basic Texts.	
Governing Body: ---	Time Frame: ---
7) Suggestion on the timing of Council and Conference	
As the programme direction and substance of the MTP and PWB have already been reviewed and approved by capitals by the time of Council, Members could consider shortening the existing 60 day consultation period between Council and Conference to 45 or 30 days.	
Proposed action:	
<u>Suggestion not accepted</u>	
The sixty day lapse of time between the pre-Conference session of Council and the Conference itself is perceived as useful by Members, hence the <i>status quo</i> should be maintained.	
Governing Body: ----	Time Frame: ---
8) Suggestion regarding Article XIV bodies*	
IPA Actions 2.68 and 2.69 were intended to provide the greater flexibility envisaged by the IEE for Article XIV bodies; however there has been insufficient progress in implementation. There has been little access by the Article XIV Bodies to the Governing Bodies and they still have limited autonomy of operation and decision-making on administrative and financial issues. In both cases, this may be due to insufficient communication between the Article XIV body Secretaries and the ADGs concerned. More progress on a number of issues would enable the Article XIV bodies to make a greater contribution to FAO’s Goals and Strategic Objectives, which would in turn enhance the results of the Organization’s work.	
Proposed action:	
Governing Body:	Time Frame:

*Suggestion added further to the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Evaluation of FAO Governance Reforms, 6 February 2015

III. Draft Conference Resolution

Resolution .../2015

Assessment of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms

THE CONFERENCE:

Recalling Resolution 1/2008, by which the Immediate Plan of Action (IPA) for FAO Renewal was approved including IPA Action 2.74, which called upon the 39th Session of Conference to assess the workings of the governance reforms, including the role and functioning of the Regional Conferences with an independent review as an input to this process;

Recognising the role of the Council in following the assessment of the governance reforms and the oversight role of the Independent Chairperson of the Council;

Welcoming the Final Report of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms (C 2015/25);

Recognising the active participation of Members through informal consultations by the regional groups and Informal meetings of the Open Ended Working Group convened in order to formulate responses to the Recommendations and Suggestions made by the independent review;

Noting the views of the Council at its 151st Session (Rome, 23-27 March 2015):

1. **Endorses** the actions proposed in the *Assessment of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms* (C 2015/26) in response to the Recommendations and Suggestions contained in the *Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms* (C 2015/25), and decides that the actions foreseen in this document be implemented by the competent Governing Bodies of the Organization;
2. **Decides** to close IPA Action 2.18 on the Council's role in recommending the budget level as clarified in document C 2015/26;
3. **Decides** to suspend IPA Action 4.4 on the size and composition of the Council, until the Members consider that there is sufficient consensus to achieve a satisfactory solution;
4. **Decides** to suspend IPA Action 2.100 on desirable qualifications for the office of Director-General pending further consultation among Members to reach consensus on this issue;
5. **Requests** that a report on the implementation of all actions foreseen in document C 2015/26 be presented to the 40th Session of the Conference in 2017.

(Adopted on ... June 2015)